

RING THAT WRECKS BUILDING.

TESTIMONY TO THE TRUTH OF WHAT STARRETT SAYS ABOUT IT.

Builder Hoggson Tells of \$11,000 Lost Divided Among Fake Competitors for a Job at Plastering—\$3,000 Profit Still Left in It Then Remedies.

W. J. Hoggson of Hoggson Bros. of 7 East Forty-fourth street, who have been for many years in the building business, confirmed yesterday all that Theodore Starratt of the Thompson-Starratt Company has been saying concerning existing conditions in the building industry in this city. Mr. Starratt has charged that there is a conspiracy between a ring of employing builders and trades unions, whereby competition is virtually crushed out and owners subjected to mercenary correct.

"That statement is absolutely correct," said Mr. Hoggson yesterday. "Such collusion as Mr. Starratt points out does exist. To my knowledge it has existed at least ten years, and how much longer I do not know. It exists not only here in New York, but it has spread to other cities. We found just such rings both in cities in Louisiana and in Tennessee, where we recently put up buildings. But here in New York it flourishes to perfection.

"To give an idea of what a farce competition is reduced to here in New York let me cite just one instance which came under my observation not long ago. A certain job of plastering was let to the lowest of four or five bidders for \$21,000. When the lowest bidder got his contract for that figure he divided up his \$21,000 among the three or four other 'competitors' and then went ahead and did the job on the \$10,000 basis that was left after the distribution of plunder—out of which he, of course, got his share.

"He made \$2,000 or \$3,000 profit on the job at \$10,000. That, you will allow, was a pretty good profit for itself. The \$11,000 he divided up with his fellow competitors was pure plunder, the result of a ring combination before the bids were put in. This information was given to me in person by one of the competitors engaged in the transaction.

"Now that is just a specimen of what goes on in the 'competitive bidding' in all the trades engaged in the erection of a building—carpenters, plumbers, bricklayers, iron workers, all the rest of them. The poor owner has not a single friend in this cutthroat work. His architect even, technically, is his enemy, for the architect's pay is a percentage on the cost of the building.

"Of course, I do not mean the slightest reflection on the profession of architecture. The architects of this city and elsewhere in the country have in their ranks men of the highest sense of honor. But just suppose for one instant, if one may indulge in so bold a flight of fancy—just suppose that an architect could be found who was actuated by mercenary motives. Don't you see that his interests would be absolutely inimical to the interests of the owner? What such an architect would do would be to make a building cost just as much more beyond the estimates as the owner could be made to stand. I am informed that history has afforded instances of architects actually acting on that principle, or rather lack of principle.

"The owner has nobody on his side. It is a clear case of 'hit him again, he's got to fight.' And so they do hit him right and left, up to the very limit of his endurance and sometimes beyond it.

"But it is not from mercenary motives on the part of the architect that the owner necessarily suffers. He suffers most as a matter of fact from the architect's lack of practical knowledge of the trade conditions in building and from the cutthroat competitive methods that prevail. The architect is an artist. Perhaps the better artist he is the more poorly he is equipped to meet the practical things—the rings, the combines and what not that the actual erection of his building involves.

"The owner goes to the architect and says: 'I want to put up a building to cost no more than \$50,000. Make me plans for a structure that can be finished for that money.' The architect makes the plans and the estimates. The plans are satisfactory and the estimates within the amount.

"Then comes the invitation to contractors for bids. And right there is where the rough sledding begins. The rings get in their work. The job can't be done for the original estimate. Either the plans must be modified or the limit of cost raised. The architect trims down his plans as little as possible and jacks up the owner for additional money as much as possible. It is the rule that buildings here in New York cost three, four, five or even more times the original estimates before they are completed. You would be astounded at the figures in some of these cases. The owner who has begun his building is absolutely at the mercy of those into whose hands he has fallen. He has launched his boat and is in a howling tempest with no pilot but his architect, who is about as helpless in the emergency as he himself.

"And finally when the building is a completed what is the situation? The owner has been harassed, months of his time has been wasted and he has not got what he wants and what he was told he could have for the sum he was prepared to spend—either that or he has got approximately what he wanted. He has lost three or four times what he set out to spend.

"I know but one instance where the owner of a building here in New York came out with a profit. It was in the case of one of the big bank buildings recently erected. The president of the bank was the man who was in charge of the building and he explained it to me in this way:

"I told the architect to figure out the utmost cost of putting up a building according to certain plans he submitted. He did so. I just exactly doubled his figures in my own mind and my own calculation was so little under the actual cost that I felt satisfied.

"This state of affairs in the building trade in New York is preposterous and cannot continue. One way out of it is to have a responsible third party thoroughly informed in the practical workings of the building business, to stand between the owner, the architect and the building trades. Let him take the amount the owner is prepared to spend and guarantee the construction of a building within those figures on the basis of plans which the owner approves and which the guarantor knows from his knowledge of the business can be carried out. The architect trims down his plans. Let this third person's profits be an agreed upon percentage of the fixed price settled on with the owner, the owner to get the benefit of whatever loss that price the building actually costs.

"In that way this competitive swindling would be done away with and when a man started out to spend so much on a building, he would know he was going to spend that, and not five or six times that much, before he got through.

made with the Vermont Marble Company to erect a factory here, the building firm promising the company its business. The marble for that building will be furnished for 33 per cent. less than the ring price in New York.

"So it is with the finished interior woodwork and other building supplies. A man who knows the decent market price of a thing can get what he wants for pretty near that price. That's where many of the architects are weak and that's why they and the owners are imposed on here in New York and even elsewhere in the country where these building rings exist, and that is pretty much all over.

"Of course this conspiracy between building employers and trades unions presents a serious problem. But that too, can be broken. A man who is willing to pay the full market value for labor on the job basis is going to get what he wants. If he can't get it in New York he can go outside and bring it into New York. Trade union workmen outside of New York are not in sympathy with this Chinese wall business that Mr. Starratt talks about and are not going to stand for it.

"Starratt is on the right track, but he has not yet quite got the situation grasped. It is the firm that thoroughly knows the building business, from the ground up and that will take the owner's figures, agree to do the work for a certain percentage on these figures and not on some other and vastly higher figures, that is going to solve this problem.

"Such a firm would represent the owner in every respect. It would deal with the architect and deal with the work and make both come within the appropriation. The architect would not have the firm. The firm would hire the architect.

"What you suppose this furnishing of bids and estimates submitted by big contracting firms costs? A big round figure, you may be sure. I don't refer to the ring sub-contractors, of course, such as for plastering and the like. I mean the bona fide bids turned in by outsiders to architects. All that is money and time wasted. Such bidders are merely fanning the air. I know of no better way to express it. Let the building firm and the owner come together in the first instance. When the firm finds out what the owner wants and how much he is willing to spend for it, the firm will take a percentage and will employ the architect and do the work. There will then be a pilot on board the boat who knows just where he is going and how to get there.

"That is the only way I can see of relieving the owner from the merciless grinding between the upper and lower millstones of the unscrupulous architect and the very practical and very mercenary combine of the building employers and the trades unions."

COUNTS GIZZYCKI ILL.

Is Being Hurried to Vienna for Treatment—Relatives Going From America.

CHICAGO, Jan. 7.—Mrs. Robert W. Patterson, her son, Joseph Medill Patterson, and wife, who was Miss Alice Higginbotham, left Chicago yesterday for Vienna, Austria, where they will meet the Countess Gizzycki, who is being hurried from Russia to Vienna for treatment by specialists at the Austrian capital.

A cable message yesterday informed the Patterson family that the Countess had become dangerously ill on the country estate of her husband, near Kiev, Russian Poland, and that she would be taken to Vienna.

The Countess Gizzycki, who was Miss Eleanor Patterson, was married last April in Washington to Count Joseph Gizzycki.

BEER FLOWS IN SCRANTON.

Strike of Brewery Employees in the City Lasted Only One Day.

SCRANTON, Pa., Jan. 7.—Beer is again freely offered for sale in Scranton. For a week the city was without beer. The strike of brewery employees, which was called by the local product, by the Brewery Employees' Union, the members of which were out on strike.

The strike began yesterday morning and the men resumed work today. Their differences with the brewers were compromised. The men struck for an eight-hour day and a 20 per cent. increase of wages. They got the eight-hour day all right, but the increase in pay was slight. Wages were made uniform, however, which caused some of the men to get less than they did before.

KILLED SON AND SON'S WIFE.

Farmer Commits a Double Murder and Then Makes Attempt at Suicide.

JOLIET, Ill., Jan. 7.—Because he was not treated as a member of the family, William Rapson, a farmer living on a small farm near Joliet, shot and killed his son and the son's wife, Kate, today, and, after notifying the neighbors of the murder, shot himself, blowing off the side of his head. He will die.

The elder Rapson called Herbert to the barn shortly after 6 o'clock this morning. There he killed the young man. After this murder the father called the daughter, who entered the barn to see a sick cow. As she entered he shot and killed her. Then he called a neighbor. When the latter came to the barn Rapson excused himself for a moment and then shot himself.

NEW SHIPBUILDING COMPANIES.

Five Subsidiary Concerns Incorporated by Sheldon and Others.

TRENTON, Jan. 7.—Five subsidiary companies of the United States Shipbuilding Corporation were incorporated in the Secretary of State's office today. They are: The Shipbuilding Corporation, the Crescent Shipyard Corporation, the Crescent Iron Works Corporation, the Samuel P. Moore & Son's Corporation and the Union Iron Works Corporation. In each case the incorporators are George B. Sheldon, John E. Jones and Charles W. Wetmore, all of New York.

FUNIFLEXOWING IS DECIDED ON.

MINORITY WILL HAVE ODDER EVIDENCE TO OFFER.

And Other Matters Calculated to Dispel Summer Delusion—Meanwhile Speaker Nixon Abides at Albany and Makes Up the Assembly Committee Himself.

Speaker S. Frederick Nixon of the Assembly was expected in New York city yesterday to confer with Chairman Odell as to the make-up of the Assembly committees. Speaker Nixon did not turn up, but remained calm and comfortable at Albany making up the committees himself. Speaker Nixon said word that he did not expect to come to town, certainly not before the Legislature reconvenes. Meanwhile Speaker Nixon, in the organization of the committees, has received the suggestions of all Republicans entitled to give him advice and is acting upon this counsel in an effort to make the majority effective in the lower house at Albany without infringing the rights of the minority, who represent many thousands of voters in the State.

Speaker Nixon has listened to the suggestions of Gov. Higgins, Senator Platt, Senator Dewey, Chairman Odell and Republicans from all parts of the State and has received the requests of Democrats for minority representation on the committees with graciousness and squareness.

The old tale was revived yesterday that Chairman Odell is to urge the appointment of a State investigating committee, to be headed by Senator Elsborg, to come to New York city to make capital to be used in the municipal campaign next fall. It may be stated that Chairman Odell and his advisers in this scheme will be compelled to furnish substantial evidence that the proposed investigation will pan out before the scheme will be accepted by Gov. Higgins and his advisers at Albany. Indeed, Republicans of importance said yesterday that they were and would be opposed to another Haynes investigation unless it could be demonstrated beyond peradventure that something beyond the personal revenge of disappointed Democratic aspirants for high public station were behind the proposition. Many Republicans complain of the constant attacks of their party at Albany upon the city of New York, the city which pays 75 per cent. of the taxes of the State, while from a political standpoint Mr. Odell's New York Herald is a daily reminder of the New York county machine, headed by William Halpin and Armistead Matthews, two notorious Tammany Hall Republicans, is looked upon as a place if not with open distrust.

Mr. Odell in public speeches and newspaper interviews for two years has declared his intention of "reorganizing and reforming" the New York county machine. He has carried out his proposition only to the extent of elevating Halpin and Matthews, who lost election on election day and who boast of their political relations with Tammany Hall leaders. Still, on the other hand, there are Republicans who favor the Senate investigating scheme. They say that the Democrats have a minority representation on the committees and through them Mr. Odell's business relations with Charles W. Morse and his chain of banks and his ice trust could be brought to light. The Democrats in these days have no sympathy with past doings and it would very much like to know the why and the wherefore of Mr. Odell's relations with the Democratic Club during the Croker domination and of Odell's dealings with Devery. So important Republicans as well as influential Democrats in these days would very much like to know the why and the wherefore of Mr. Odell's relations with the Democratic Club during the Croker domination and of Odell's dealings with Devery. So important Republicans as well as influential Democrats in these days would very much like to know the why and the wherefore of Mr. Odell's relations with the Democratic Club during the Croker domination and of Odell's dealings with Devery.

There was one vacant chair at the dinner at the Republican Club on Thursday night—that of William Barnes, Jr., chairman of the executive committee of the Republican State committee. Chairman Odell and Mr. Barnes, while preserving the amenities of their respective places in the State organization, are nevertheless only partially friendly. Mr. Barnes's early and successful stand for the reelection of United States Senator Dewey was punished by Chairman Odell when Odell appointed G. D. B. Hasbrouck, Presiding Judge of the Court of Claims, to the vacant seat on the Supreme Court bench of the Third Judicial district, caused by the resignation of D. Cady Herriek of Albany.

Whereas Mr. Barnes on Thursday night, Jan. 6, he was consulting with a man named Black, ex-Gov. Frank S. Black, whom Mr. Odell turned down at the last moment for United States Senator. Mr. Black is the Republican boss of Rensselaer county and Mr. Barnes is the Republican boss of Albany county, the two great counties in the Third Judicial district. Columbus county is the Republican boss, and these three counties can swing in the judicial convention the four others in the district, Schoharie, Greene, Ulster and Sullivan.

The consultation between Mr. Black and Mr. Barnes on Thursday night resulted in the formation of an alliance, offensive and defensive, of which Mr. Odell will be the object of the attack. Justice Hasbrouck comes up for the nomination next fall. Either Mr. Black, Mr. Barnes or Mr. Payne will defeat Justice Hasbrouck's nomination or they will close their eyes to Republican support of Mr. Herriek, should the Democratic judicial convention of the district give Mr. Herriek the nomination to his old place on the Supreme Court and efficient campaign as the Democratic candidate for Governor last fall.

The principal object of the conference between Mr. Barnes and Mr. Black, though, was to prevent the nomination of Justice Hasbrouck, and this with the help of Mr. Payne they can do.

Justice Hasbrouck was at the Fifth Avenue Hotel yesterday afternoon. He was conversing with the result of the meeting with Black and Barnes, but declined to discuss it, saying: "I am attending to my duties on the bench and am not interested myself about the politics of the future."

TO LEAD THE PROHIBITIONISTS.

Charles R. Jones of Philadelphia Elected National Committee Chairman.

CHICAGO, Jan. 7.—Charles R. Jones of Philadelphia has been elected chairman of the Prohibition national committee to succeed Oliver W. Stewart of Chicago, as a result of the wrangle over the latter's expense of the campaign fund. The executive committee met this afternoon in the headquarters in the Temple, all six members being present. Mr. Stewart again resigned from the executive committee and his place was filled by F. C. Hendrickson of Maryland.

Mr. Jones, the new head of the party, has been chairman of the Pennsylvania State committee. He will receive a salary of \$2,000 a year from the "dry" party. The party leaders will keep the national headquarters in Chicago for a time at least.

GRAND JURY FAILED TO INDICT.

Chairman of Republican Committee Was Accused of Demanding Campaign Money.

WATERTOWN, N. Y., Jan. 7.—The Grand Jury now in session here, made up mostly of Republicans, has failed to indict Attorney

Vantine's
The Unusual Store.

ANNOUNCE that on Monday, January 9th, they will display the new Printed and Embroidered Dress Silks, Satins and Pongees for Season 1905. An early inspection is invited, as there are only a few Dresses of a design or color.

A. A. Vantine & Co.,
Broadway, bet. 18th and 19th Sts.

ART SALES AND EXHIBITIONS. ART SALES AND EXHIBITIONS.

"Nothing brightens up a home more than a charming wife, sweet children, and beautiful pictures."

The Fifth Ave. Art Galleries

366-368 Fifth Ave., rear 34th St.

Mr. Silo Begs to Announce That His Galleries Will Be Converted Into a Veritable

"Court of Beauty"

FROM JAN. 9 TO 13, INCLUSIVE

During this time the most beautiful and charming pictures ever offered in this city will be shown in his galleries.

HIGH CLASS PAINTINGS

By the Great Foreign Artists.

Beautiful, Charming Subjects,

and Portraits and Studies of

Fair Women

This Unique Exhibition will be on view at the Galleries from

To-morrow, Monday, Jan. 9th, to 13th, inclusive.

The Sale at auction will be held in the

Grand Ball Room of the Waldorf-Astoria,

Thursday and Friday Evenings, Jan. 12 and 13, at 8:15

BY ORDER OF MR. EUGENE F. OF PARIS

Mr. James P. Silo will conduct the sale.

MEAN TO DOWN HASBROUCK.

BLACK AND BARNES AND PAYN CAN DO IT AMONG THEM.

And Now You Know Where Chairman Barnes Was on the Night the Republican Club Was Giving Its Dinner to Chairman Odell and One Chair Was Vacant.

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WANTS BOLL WEEVIL REWARD.

Turn Sheep or Goats Into Your Cotton Field, Farmer Jackson Says.

NEW ORLEANS, Jan. 7.—Samuel Jackson, a farmer of Stevensville, has claimed the reward of \$5,000 offered by the Legislature for a practical and cheap boll weevil exterminator. His remedy is goats or sheep, and he says that practical experiment shows that, if these animals are turned into the cotton field just about the time the cottons are beginning to make squares, the animals will defoliate the plant, stripping it of its leaves and the young squares, which contain the first crop of weevils, without injuring the plants in the least. The cotton thus defoliated quickly recovers, puts on new leaves and squares and makes a big crop free of boll weevils.

1905.

ADOREA

The New Breakfast Food

The Health Food Company's

30th Anniversary Gift to

Its Army of Patrons.

Price 15 Cents.

No. 61 5th Ave., New York

B. Altman & Co.

STORE WILL BE CLOSED AT 5 P. M. DAILY.

B. Altman & Co. are offering at present in many of their departments, various articles which have been reduced in price, and invite attention especially to the following announcements as being of particular interest:

UPHOLSTERY MATERIALS, PORTIERES, ETC.

Upholstery Fabrics, Portieres, Couch and Table Covers,

Lambrequins, Lounging Cushions, Screens, Lace Covers,

Tidies and Scarfs are being shown at prices

that are considerably reduced.

Also Embroidered Portieres, Valances and Lambrequins,

at Fifty Per Cent. Less Than Regular Prices.

On MONDAY, Jan. 9th, the following will be placed on sale:

Upholstery and Drapery Fabrics, for furniture coverings,

wall hangings, window and door draperies; former

prices, \$2.75 to \$12.50 per yard at

\$1.75, \$2.50, \$3.50 to \$7.50 per yard.

Fabric Squares (24x24), suitable for chair seats and cushion

tops, at 60c., 90c., \$1.25 to \$2.50 each.

Satin Derby Portieres (Rose and Green), the regular

price of which is \$13.50 per pair, at \$7.50

Double-faced Figured Velour Portieres (Ivory and Brown),

formerly \$27.00 & \$35.00 per pair, at \$16.50 & \$22.00

Double-faced Jute Velour Portieres (Blue and Rose),

formerly \$35.00 per pair, at \$22.50

ORIENTAL RUGS.

A number of Oriental Rugs in large sizes, suitable for

Reception Rooms, Parlors, Libraries, Dining

Rooms and Large Halls, are offered at

GREATLY REDUCED PRICES.

LINENS AND BLANKETS.

During this week the special sale of Linens will be con-

tinued, comprising Fine Decorative Table Linens

and a complete assortment of

Household Linens, which includes Table Linens, Bed

Linens, plain, hemstitched and embroidered; Huckaback,

Fancy Woven and Turkish Towels, also Kitchen and

Glass Toweling.

BLANKETS, COMFORTABLES AND BEDSPREADS

COTTON SHEETS AND PILLOW CASES

are also offered at low prices.

ART OBJECTS AND BRIC-A-BRAC.

Large Reductions in the prices of a number of pieces in

this department will be made to take effect

on Monday, January 9th,

mention being specially made of Bronze Groups and Statu-

ettes, Clock and Clock Sets of Bronze and Enamel,

Library and Boudoir Lamps, Electric Lamps, Porcelain

Vases and Plaques with Vienna decoration, Curio Cabinets

and Fancy Tables with marble tops.

FURS AND FUR GARMENTS.

The following Garments (recently made-up) will be offered

on TUESDAY, January 10th:

Coats of Natural Squirrel, \$65.00

Squirrel Lined Cloth Paletots, with Persian Paw,

Alaska Sable or Beaver collars, sleeves also fur

lined, \$35.00 and \$50.00

Persian Lamb Coats, with shawl collars of Chinchilla,

Mink and Baum Marten, \$125.00

Also Fur Sets, consisting of Muff and Neckpiece, as

follows: Natural Squirrel, \$11.75 and \$20.50; Sabled

Squirrel, \$14.50 and \$17.00; Persian Paw, \$16.25;

Persian Lamb, \$23.00; Beaver, \$20.00; Black Lynx,

\$34.00; Mink, \$35.00; Alaska Sable, \$17.75 and \$27.00.

Nineteenth Street and Sixth Avenue, New York.